

Commissioner's Weekly Field Memo
Wednesday, November 25, 2015

Because of the holiday schedule, we are sending this week's Field Memo today rather than Friday. To you and everyone in your school community, we hope you enjoy a happy and safe holiday.

Notes from Commissioner Wagner

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2. RIDE to send weekly email [updates](#) to the education field at large
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December 8: [Special Education](#) census due
December 10: Special Education [duplicates](#) resolution
December 18: Student [exit data](#) calculation due

Notes from Commissioner Wagner

1. Rhode Island joins national Campaign for Grade-Level Reading

Yesterday we participated in a roundtable discussion on reading and literacy, as Rhode Island KIDS COUNT and the United Way of Rhode Island jointly launched the Rhode Island Campaign for Grade-Level Reading. RIDE will be an active partner in this campaign, which is designed bring together business,

government, labor, and nonprofit organizations to improve reading proficiency at the 3rd-grade level. There is a general consensus that children who are not proficient readers in grade 3 are much more likely than their peers to struggle through school and to drop out of high school. When children can read, a whole world opens up for them; when they can't read, the world starts to close down. Governor Raimondo spoke at the launch event and identified grade-level reading as a top priority for her administration.

The Rhode Island campaign is part of a national movement: The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading: 3rd-grade Reading Success Matters. The national movement focuses attention and resource on the issues of school readiness, chronic absenteeism, summer learning loss, parent engagement, student health, and high-quality teaching. The national campaign cites the Providence Schools as one of the “bright spots” for its partnership with City Year aimed at helping students set goals to reduce chronic absenteeism.

All of these are issues of great importance to us in Rhode Island, and we look forward to working in partnership with KIDS COUNT and the United Way on this important initiative.

You can read more about the national campaign here:

<http://gradelevelreading.net/>

2. RIDE to send weekly email updates to the education field at large

As I noted to you by email yesterday, we have created a mailing list that includes all certified teachers and district-level

administrators, and we will use this list to send to the field at large some highlights from each week's Field Memo and other news and updates of interest. We will send these communications to the field at large several days after you have received initial notification in the weekly Field Memo. Here is the first such update, which we sent yesterday:

Dear [Fellow Educator],

As we work together to support teaching and learning in Rhode Island, we are expanding our use of social media to keep one another informed about education news, initiatives, ideas, and opportunities.

We would like to have you on our contact list to send occasional messages and regular updates, such as items from the weekly Commissioner's Field Memo that we transmit to all school district superintendents and to the heads of charter public schools and state-operated schools. A typical Field Memo includes notifications about scheduled events, such as conferences and webinars, observations about current topics in education, and recognitions of educator and student excellence. We believe you would find these communications helpful and informative.

We will use this list only for communications directly from the Commissioner, and we will not share email addresses with outside parties. Below, I have included an example of the kind of communication we will be likely to send to you.

Of course, we will send you these communications only if you want to receive them, so if you ever wish to be removed from our contact list, you can always remove your name and

address by clicking the “Safe Unsubscribe” button in the footer of this message. You can also click “Update Profile/Email Address” if you would like us to send these messages to you at a different address.

That said, we hope you will remain on the contact list and become part of our ongoing conversation about our schools, our educators and other support professionals, and our students.

If you have any feedback, please send it to us at info@ride.ri.gov, and stay tuned for coming announcements of other opportunities to stay in touch.

Ken

Several items from last week’s Field Memo followed this introductory letter. We believe that these communications to educators will help keep all of us informed about what’s going on in our field.

3. Finance/Efficiencies Division chief to leave RIDE in January

Andrea Castañeda, the chief of our Division of Financial Integrity and Statewide Efficiencies, has announced that she will leave RIDE in mid-January to pursue other opportunities. Andrea has been a valued and highly respected member of the RIDE team in a number of capacities for many years. She came to RIDE in 2001 for her first job upon graduation from college, and later left to work for the Providence Public Schools. She came back to RIDE in 2004 for a two-year period, focused on transformation of high schools. After a time in graduate school, Andrea joined us again 5 years ago as chief of the newly formed Division of Accelerating

School Performance, where among other accomplishments her division led the development of our current accountability system, the expansion of charter options, and the redesign of career-and-technical education. Two years ago she moved into her current post, where among other accomplishments she led the development of our new strategic plan and she is providing technical support for the Funding Formula Working Group. We will miss Andrea at RIDE, and I will keep you informed about the reassignment of responsibilities in her Division.

From RIDE

Assessments:

4. *Reminder:* Please register for PARCC data-analysis workshops for district, school leadership teams

Starting next week, RIDE is offering data-analysis workshops designed exclusively for district and school leadership teams to help support the use of PARCC data to inform curriculum, instruction, and professional development decisions.

The number of participants at each workshop is limited to 40 to encourage small-group interaction. This workshop will provide an opportunity for participants to review their PARCC data and participate in structured activities utilizing the Data Use professional development tools to dig deeper into results. Staff from the Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum will be on hand to facilitate group discussions.

Each district and school should try to schedule its leadership team to attend on the same day during the same session. All sessions at

each location cover the same material and are scheduled to last 2½ hours.

Each participant should bring a laptop computer and his/her RIDEmap username and password.

The majority of analyses will be done in the Instructional Support System; however, participants are welcome to pre-load their laptops with their school or district PARCC-results data so that they can perform advanced analyses during the workshop and discuss results with fellow team members.

The locations, dates, and times for each workshop are:

Middletown Administration Building, 26 Oliphant Lane

Tuesday (December 1):

Morning Session: 9 – 11:30 a.m. (doors open at 8:30 a.m.) [Registration link](#)

Afternoon Session: 12:30 – 3 p.m. (doors open at noon) [Registration link](#)

December 3:

Morning Session: 9 – 11:30 a.m. (doors open at 8:30 a.m.) [Registration link](#)

Afternoon Session: 12:30 – 3 p.m. (doors open at noon) [Registration link](#)

CCRI Knight Campus, Room 1134 (next to cafeteria), 400 East Ave, Warwick

December 7:

Morning Session: 9 – 11:30 a.m.(doors open at 8:30 a.m.) [Registration link](#)

Afternoon Session: 12:30 – 3 p.m. (doors open at noon) [**This session is full**]

December 8:

Morning Session: 9 – 11:30 a.m. (doors open at 8:30 a.m.) [**This session is full**]

Afternoon Session: 12:30 – 3 p.m. (doors open at noon) [Registration link](#)

Northern Rhode Island Collaborative, 640 George Washington Highway, Lincoln

December 4:

Morning Session: 9 – 11:30 a.m. (doors open at 8:30 a.m.) [Registration link](#)

Afternoon Session: 12:30 – 3 p.m. (doors open at noon) [Registration link](#)

December 17:

Morning Session: 9 – 11:30 a.m. (doors open at 8:30 a.m.) [Registration link](#)

Afternoon Session: 12:30 – 3 p.m. (doors open at noon) [Registration link](#)

If you have questions about these workshops, please send an email to parcc@ride.ri.gov or contact Dr. Kevon Tucker-Seeley, at 222-8494.

Legal:

5. Commissioner's decisions rule on issue of residency

RIDE has issued the following Commissioner's decisions:

Commissioner holds that where child resides with mother in Woonsocket during three of four school nights, and with father in Cumberland during the remaining four nights, divorced parents with joint custody who share responsibility for child's care, shelter, and education may enroll child in school located in either town, eschewing rigid application of the old "school nights' rule."

http://www2.ride.ri.gov/applications/RideDirectory/DOCS/2015/019-15_Residency_of_M._Doe_vs._Cumberland%201172015.pdf

The Legal Guardian of Student Doe failed to meet his burden of proof that his appointment effectuated Doe's actual residence in Cumberland and that the appointment was for a substantial purpose other than school attendance. Nonetheless, Student Doe is allowed to remain in Cumberland schools until the guardian's appointment is reviewed by the Cumberland Probate Court and a determination is made as to where and with whom Student Doe is to live.

http://www2.ride.ri.gov/applications/RideDirectory/DOCS/2015/020-15_In_RE_S._DOE_11242015.pdf

From other state agencies

6. State Police seeking teachers, schools interested in Cisco Network Academies on cybersecurity, cloud technologies

Please see this message from the State Police:

We are looking for schools and teachers who would be interested in taking the first steps in forming a Cisco Networking Academy at their school. A Cisco Networking Academy is an IT and career-skills development program that provides industry-recognized training and certifications to high-school students. Through hands-on labs, online, and instructor learning, students learn the fundamentals of networking, cybersecurity, and cloud technologies that will make them extremely marketable to colleges and employers.

Aside from having interested students, the two basic components to forming a Cisco Networking Academy are having instructors who are interested in learning the material to then teach and having the right equipment. We are potentially in the position to be able to provide the necessary equipment, but are first looking to Rhode Island educators who might be interested in dedicating the time to learning the required material. The instructor curriculum is delivered through the Community College of Rhode Island and would be paid for by the Computer Crimes Unit.

If you are interested, please contact Meghan Martinez, Cyber Terrorism Program Manager, at Meghan.Martinez@risp.dps.ri.gov

From other organizations

7. Blackstone Heritage Corridor offers free learning program for schools

On behalf of the Blackstone Heritage Corridor and the National Park Service, Rhode Island schools and school districts are invited to participate in Blackstone Valley 101, an online, interactive learning program that gives an overview of the history and heritage of the valley. The 45-minute program is free. To learn more, visit:

BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org
and
Tinyurl.com/blackstonevalley101

If your schools would be interested in participation, contact James Burlingame, at blrburlingame@gmail.com or 247-5955.

RIDE will post this field memo on Tuesday, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/InsideRIDE/FieldMemos.aspx>